TL 3786

Submission to the

UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON DECOLONIZATION

New York, 9 August 1990

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Mister Chairman,
ladies and gentlemen,

In the first place I would like to pay my respects to this body and to its distinguished members which has so often and so relevantly served the cause of emancipation of people who were subjected to colonialism and, secondly, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to express here some words in favor of a small but heroic people.

In the course of the period since the last meeting of this Commission there has been profound and positive alterations in the political situation on a world scale, as everybody here knows. A wind of liberty has swept the planet and peoples, who for a long time had been subjected to the will and discretion of self-appointed leaders, had for the first time the right to be heard and freedom of choice. I'm referring obviously to the events of Eastern Europe but also - and now in the ambit of colonial situations, which are more in the domain of this Commission -, to the independence of Namibia and to the promising developments which are taking place in South Africa.

Unfortunately some points of disturbance still remain. In some parts of the globe (although less and less) dictators who rose to power through a sequence of bloody coups continue to persecute their citizens while in others the people are prevented from the legitimate exercise of her right of choice.

The people of East Timor find themselves in this situation. In this year of 1990 in which are commemorated with joy the 30 years since the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonized People and Countries, a much sadder anniversary is also marked: the 15 years of colonial occupation of that territory by Indonesia.

This current year finds East Timor in the paradoxical situation of being at present the most populated of the 18 territories which are still inscribed on the list of non-autonomous territories of this Commission, which only reenforces the necessity and the urgency of finding a solution for the problem.

In spite of the distinguished past which Indonesia has in the domain of anti-colonial struggle (in the fifties and beginning of the sixties) and of its efforts to present itself as the liberator of the Timorese people from the colonial yoke of the Portuguese and to present itself as a disinterested benefactor, the truth is that the Indonesian presence in East Timor reveals today all the signs which characterized the classic European colonization such as we know it from the 19 century and the first half of the 20 century: economic exploitation, political repression and military occupation.

The situation of Indonesian domination can be seen in practically all the areas of economical life of East Timor. The most lucrative local activities, such as coffee growing, are controlled by a restrict number of companies, normally linked with military interests. External trade is also practically monopolized and the money invested in the country, which in part is channeled directly from aid and from external donations, ends up profiting a very reduced number of corrupted bureaucrats linked with the civil construction and public works companies. Even the small businesses, such as shops and restaurants, are now practically all in hands of Indonesians as can be established from reports from ordinary visitors or tourists. The complains of Timorese, including even the "Gobernur", are well known regarding the discrimination in the filling of public positions by Indonesians (normally javanese) even if they are less well qualified.

On the other hand, other "businesses" brought by the Indonesian "civilizing mission", flourish. In the areas around Dili hundreds of prostitutes (this is something new in the territory, they where almost non-existent before the invasion), offer their services. Immediately around Becora and Comoro markets jostle dozens and dozens of bare-foot vendors, emigrants from the poor and overpopulated cities of Java.

As is normal in the cases of colonial domination, if the colonizers are well the colonized are not. And the situation in East Timor is really critical. In statements made on the 5th. of August of 1989 to the "Jakarta Post", Mário Carrascalão, the governor of the territory, said that malaria is endemic and that the supplies of medicines "are not always those that were necessary". Tuberculosis affects 70% of the population of East Timor, according to him; he said furthermore that of the 61 districts of the territory, only 40 have a doctor. In the entire territory there exist only 25 qualified midwife and the number of paramedics is also very small. The level of illiteracy is in the reach of 92%., the major part of the population lives below the poverty level and unemployment is extremely high.

The same kind of problems was detected in the course of a seminary on East Timor which was organized by the "Center for Regional and Rural Studies" of the University of Gajah Madja at the beginning of this year. In a paper by professor Loekman Sutrisno based on field work carried out in the territory, he drew attention to the fact of lack of work for young Timorese was causing social problems in the territory, as also were disputes by land, prostitution and human rights violations. According to prof. L. Sutrisno "many Timorese complain that their land was illegally appropriated by local authorities"; as regards prostitution, the vast majority of it comes from Java and this "has a negative impact on the local population", as also has the movement of people to new villages; according to this sociologist, the people complain that they were forced to abandon their ancestors villages where they were able to cultivate their own lands ("Jakarta Post", 6th January 1990). Analogous conclusions to this, that is that the Timorese population appears to be strongly traumatized by the post-invasion experience and by the latter Indonesian policies of "development" were contained in 130 page report drawn up by

this Center of Studies at the joint request of the Central Indonesian Bank and the Planning and Development Board of East Timor and this was the cause of the abrupt cancelation of a seminar on this theme which was planned for 16 April last in Dili, according to the "Far Eastern Economic Review", of the 3rd. of May 1990.

Another case of shameful colonial exploitation is found in the agreement signed on the 11th of December last between Indonesia and other neighboring State, with regard to the exploitation of the mineral resources of the Timor Sea (the Timor Gap Agreement) in flagrant violation of international legislation on maritime law which does not considers valid frontiers drawn around non self-determined territories. Indonesia prepares itself to take possession of part of the immense riches (in the 170.000 Km2 of area in question are contained one of the 25 largest deposits of petroleum and natural gas of the planet), without the consent of the legitime owners, the Timorese. Timor petroleum alone would be sufficient to guarantee to the Timorese an average "per capita" income 4 times greater than that of the Indonesians, during the coming half century.

As is normal in cases of colonialism, the economic exploitation is accompanied by political repression. Innumerable truly shocking cases of violation of human rights can be found in reports of such reputable organizations as "Amnesty International" and "Asia Watch". I would not refer, however, to these documents but rather to exerts from an analysis that a country which is an allied to Indonesia and which supports it in the Timor question, carried out on the situation in the territory; I refer to the chapter on Indonesia of the "Country Report on Human Rights" for 1990 of the the State Department of The United States:

> General situation: "Frequent military operations took place in East Timor (...). Despite progress in some areas, including greater freedom of movement (...) serious human rights problems remained. These included (...) periodic detentions of East Timorese suspected of Fretilin sympathies, killing of civilians in East Timor (...)" (...)
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> Political and other extrajudicial killing: "An estimated two dozen or more civilians were killed by the military in East Timor in 1989." (...)
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> Disappearance: "Temporary disappearance of persons held for interrogation by security forces occurred periodically(...)" (...)
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> Torture: "Several students detained in the wake of Pope's visit to East Timor in October were reportedly beaten. (...) East Timorese bishop Belo and others alleged mistreatment and torture by security forces in East Timor of persons detained on suspicion of aiding or sympathizing with the Fretilin guerrillas (...)" (...)

Arbitrary arrest: "Security forces in East Timor on several occasions detained persons for days or weeks on suspicion of subversive activity. " (...)

Arbitrary interference with privacy: "(...) forced or surreptitious entries by security agents reportedly occurs regularly, especially in East Timor. (...) Correspondence generally is not monitored, although letter mail to and from East Timor may still be an exception.".

In the current difficulty (or even impossibility) of access to the territory on the part of independent observers, and in particular to those areas were the guerrillas are active, we may assume that the cases described are a small part of those that really occurred. In certain exceptional circumstances, a tourist or a foreign journalist does however have the opportunity to be present in person at scenes of repression.

This happen during the visit by Pope John Paul II on the 12th October 1989. The words which follow were written by the journalist Francesc Valls, an eye witness of the events in Taci-Tolu, in the reputable Spanish journal "El Pais" of 13th October:

"It was a quarter to two (seven o´clock in the morning in Spain) when a group of 20 young people broke the security cordons and shouted "Long live the Pope". The police - who were armed with enormous wooden-batons - made them withdraw. The Pope looked towards the young people for a minute. Then he went to change his clothes and it was then that the plain of Taci-Tolu (...) was transformed into a battle field.
(...) A second wave of demonstrators - some hundreds - reached about 20 meters from the altar trying to show a banner in which, as far as it seemed, was written in red letters on a blue background the following phrase: ´ Fretilin greets the Pope´. Then the most important incidents began. The police beat the demonstrators with their enormous batons and tried to isolate them in the lower part of the plain, far from the Press (...)
Meanwhile the shouts for independence for Timor got louder. The security forces began from then on to act with increasing violence against journalists. They violently snatched the cameras from two of them, destroying the films. The demonstrators surrounded by a huge dusty cloud were defending themselves by throwing chairs and stones at the police. Thousands of people - its calculated that about 80.000 people were present at the mass - fled from the fighting."

A similar occasion took place when two Australian tourists, Jenny Groves and John Andrew McMillan, were present in the 17th of January in front of "Hotel Turismo" in Dili, when dialog took place between the North American ambassador, John Monjo, a visitor to the territory and a delegation of one or two hundreds young Timorese students. After the departure of the American ambassador, the military and raid police brutally attacked the defenseless young people with batons and gun butts.Dozens of them were injured (of whom some in critical state, and eventually dead), who were later treated by the International Red Cross. Characteristically,

the first point of the letter which the young people handed at that time to the American ambassador said: "Dear Mr. Ambassador, Honorable: we would like to ask you to be our intermediary to your government, the Senate and the Congress of the American people for the liberation of our country from the javanese colonialism."

The guerrilla fighting, which Falintil is leading in the mountains and the villages of East Timor, is a combat which has all the appearances of those which were waged in the decades of the fifties and sixties in Africa by the nationalists movements against the European powers. This is not by accident. Actually, Falintil´s struggle of today is a real anti-colonial struggle.

When the opposition to the brutal policy being carried out by Indonesia in the territory is more intense then simple unarmed protests the occupant does not hesitate to resort to the classic experience used by the colonial powers: miscegenation, cultural assimilation, psico-social war, strategic resettlement villages, indigenousation of the war,... All of this is old, everything is well known...

But if this "modern" counter-guerrilla techniques fails, there always remains that great fall-back, the use of hordes of men and weapons of war. Periodically Indonesia has opted for this road in East Timor. At the present, for example, one of these operations has been taking place in a large scale since February or March. According to documents received from inside East Timor and also to reports made by Timorese refugees who arrived in Lisbon a few weeks back through the humanitarian programs of the International Red Cross, a large number of battalions of the Indonesian army (that can reach up to 40 thousand soldiers) supported by two helicopters squadrons and about 6 thousands Timorese militia conscripts are involved in one more clean-up operation against the guerrillas. It would be recalled that the average distribution of Indonesian soldiers in East Timor (about 15 to 20 thousand men) makes this territory the most militarized zone on the planet (the number of soldiers per Km2 is only surpassed, slightly, in the case of Israel).

The military regime does not make any secret of its new colonial aggressive intentions. In a speech given in Dili, by general L. B. Murdani, on the late 3rd of February, to an audience composed of the principal civil and military authorities in East Timor, which was transcribed and published by the Australian newspaper "Sunday Herald" of the 11th of March, the Indonesian minister of Defense made it clear:

> "In the past there have been some small countries which wanted to go their own way and, without hesitation, the Indonesian government has taken measures to stop them. All the forces at our disposal were used to stop the creation of small States. This I also will say with regard to Timtim [East-Timor]. (...) Therefore don´t try to be the heroes of the hour, beating your breast and claiming ´I´m a Timorese patriot´. Timorese patriots do not exist, there are only Indonesian patriots. The nation of Timor does not exist, there is only a nation of Indonesia. (...) I´ve already said, if you try to organize yourselves as a State and if this movement is strong it will be crushed by ABRI [the Indonesian

army]. ABRI may fail the first time but will be tried a second and a third. (...) We will crush them all! I repeat we will crush them all!"

Mister Chairman,
ladies and gentlemen,

The history of East Timor in this last fifteen years has been a history of pain an heroism. It´s the heroic resistance of this people against the Indonesian colonial yoke which has maintained the juridical situation in the territory the same as that when in the sixties it was included for the first time in the list of non-autonomous territories of this Commission.

The Timorese today, as then, aspired to the power to decide about their future, freely and without constraints. They demand that the contents of the United Nations Charter and successive Resolutions (namely number 1514) should be put into practice and that they can exercise the right to self-determination.

The formula suggested in 1989 by the bishop of Dili, Monsignor Belo, in a letter addressed to the Secretary General of the United Nations regarding the carrying out of a "referendum" by direct, secret and universal voting, under the supervision of the United Nations and the international community, would appear to combine the conditions for it to be considered as a balanced and serious proposal.

In conjunction with the prior steps which this proposal presupposes (the opening up of the territory without restrictions to independent observers and international humanitarian organizations, a cease fire, withdrawal of the invading army, the organization of a transitional administration) it is indeed the only draft of the solution with some appearance of plausibility.

It is the moral and historical duty of this Commission to hear, to support and to encourage those people which still today, with the new millennium approaching, suffer in the injust situation of cruel domination by another State. May the inspiration of those fighters who successfully passed through this Organ during the last decades help us to definitively root out this cancer of the modern History still alive indeed in East Timor, colonialism.

Thank you.